DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 081 424 JC 730 208

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TITLE Community Colleges with Collective Bargaining Agreements: Are They Different?
NOTE 14p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Collective Bargaining; *Community Colleges; *Comparative Analysis; *Educaticnal Research; Post Secondary Education; Statistical Analysis; Technical Reports

ABSTRACT

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ED 081424

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES WITH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS: ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

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The controversy surrounding the appropriateness of collective bargaining by professional employees in colleges and universities has captured the attention of scholars with an intensity seldom equaled in the past. It is evident that the controversy has raised serious questions about the fundamental relationships between the constituencies of higher education and will leave its indelible mark on the academic community long after its disposition.

The absence of data-based research is alarming considering the sensitivity and potential significance of the collective bargaining movement. This void in the literature has fostered much speculative discussion about the underlying causes and possible consequences of the widespread adoption of collective bargaining procedures. Shulman notes that the result of such discussions is that <u>any</u> contention regarding the movement's potential impact can be documented by the experiences of those institutions which have adopted collective bargaining agreements.[1] Such uncertainty is particularly unfortunate in light of the movement's potential rate of growth. Farber notes that 65 percent of public school teachers were organized in only nine years and predicts that this growth rate will be matched in colleges and universities during the 1970's.[2]

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Abstract

The absence of data-based research on the collective bargaining movement is surprising given the potential significance of this issue to the academic community. The purpose of this study is to show that community colleges can be differentiated on the basis of the particular collective bargaining representative selected and, furthermore, that those affiliated with one bargaining representative are different from community colleges which are not affiliated with any bargaining representative. These institutional differences are presented and their implications for both the collective bargaining and community college movements are discussed.

One of the rare data-based research studies on this issue was conducted by Haehn who developed a profile of faculty members in the California State College system who supported the adoption of collective bargaining procedures. In comparison to their colleagues who were opposed to these procedures, these faculty members tended to: 1) come from upper-manual and lower white-collar backgrounds; 2) be dissatisfied with their work environments; 3) belong to the Democratic Party; 4) espouse liberal or radical political views; 5) be drawn more frequently from the liberal arts disciplines, especially the humanities and social sciences; 6) have a greater research perspective; and 7) possess a higher level of educational preparation.[3] Though Haehn's study provides some specific insights into possible underlying causes of faculty support of collective bargaining procedures, the restricted perspective derived from the exclusive use of faculty characteristics is unnecessarily limiting. A more productive approach might employ an institutional perspective through the use of environmental variables frequently used to describe colleges and universities. Results from such research would provide a more comprehensive vantagepoint from which to assess the implications of the collective bargaining movement within the academic community.

The purpose of this study is to show that community colleges can be differentiated on the basis of the particular bargaining representative selected and, furthermore, that those affiliated with one particular bargaining representative are different from community colleges which are not affiliated with any collective bargaining representative. The study focuses on community colleges because they have had more extensive experience with collective bargaining than four-year institutions and are expected to continue rapid enrollment growth in the future.

Method

Various attempts have been made by Pace and Stern,[4] Astin and Holland,[5] Astin,[6] Creager and Astin,[7] and Richards, Rand, and Rand[8] to describe colleges and universities in terms of environmental variables. With the exception of the latter study, which dealt with medical schools, the above research has focused on four-year institutions. The absence of similar studies on two-year colleges is particularly unfortunate since there are almost as many two-year as four-year institutions at the present time and in the fall of 1969 more students enrolled as freshmen in two-year institutions than in four-year institutions.[9] This growth rate is expected to continue, especially if the recommendations of the Carnegie Commission are adopted.[10]

One of the more significant efforts in two-year college environmental research was conducted by Richards, Rand, and Rand. Six factors or categories of college characteristics were obtained by performing a factor analysis of some 36 measures of two-year college characteristics.[11] A recent study by Rodgers represents a further effort to fill the void in the research literature on two-year colleges.[12] Through the use of factor analysis procedures, Rodgers developed standardized factor scores ($x=50$; s.d.=10) for all 772 two-year institutions reported in American Junior Colleges[13] and in addition, he developed separate factor scores for the 621 public and 151 private two-year colleges. For the 621 public two-year institutions, Rodgers selected 25 variables for analysis. The factor loadings for each of these variables on each of the four community college factors are presented in Table 1. Only those variables with a loading of $\pm$ .30 were included in the factor descriptions.

(Insert Table 1 about here)

These four factors or dimensions of community colleges constituted the predictor variables in a stepwise, multiple discriminant analysis. The dependent variables were those community colleges with collective bargaining agreements negotiated by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT, n=36), National Education Association (NEA, n=79), and a random sample of community colleges which have no collective bargaining agreement (RS, n=50).[14]

Results

The means and standard deviations of the institutional standardized factor scores of AFT, NEA, and RS community colleges and the univariate F-ratio for each predictor variable in the stepwise, multiple discriminant analysis are presented in Table 2. The overall F-ratio approximation resulting from the discriminant analysis was 5.31; with d.f.=8 and 318, it was statistically significant (p .01).

(Insert Table 2 about here)

The predictor variables are presented in Table 2 in the order in which they emerged in the stepwise analysis. That is, "Exclusivity" accounted for the greatest portion of the variance, the addition of "Emerging Status" to "Exclusivity" provided the greatest reduction in the remaining unexplained variance, etc. It can be seen from inspection of the univariate F-ratios in Table 2 that AFT, NEA, and RS community colleges are significantly different (p .01) on three of the four factors. However, when these four factors are considered jointly by multivariate analysis, the results of the discriminant analysis showed that all the significant variance between

these groups of community colleges was accounted for by one variable, "Exclusivity," and that the addition of the three remaining variables did not contribute significantly to the reduction of the remaining unexplained variance. "Exclusivity" scores differentiated AFT community colleges from NEA and RS community colleges. However, they did not differentiate NEA and RS community colleges.

The effectiveness of the predictor variables in classifying AFT, NEA, and RS community colleges is presented in Table 3, the correct classification being those underlined on the diagonal.

(Insert Table 3 about here)

The overall effectiveness of prediction for AFT and NEA community colleges was 61 percent, with those having collective bargaining agreements negotiated by the AFT having the most nearly accurate prediction (67 percent).

Discussion

Given the four factors or dimensions developed by Rodgers to describe the environments of community colleges, the above results have demonstrated that there is a statistically significant difference between those community colleges affiliated with the AFT and those affiliated with the NEA or that have no collective bargaining affiliation (RS). The results indicated that AFT community colleges are distinguished from the two other groups by their higher mean scores on the dimension labeled "Exclusivity." This means that AFT community colleges, in comparison to the NEA and RS institutions, tend to have a higher percentage of their faculty with earned doctorates, to charge higher tuition rates, to have larger library holdings and to be more

selective in their admissions policies (see Table 1). It should be emphasized that there were no statistically significant differences between the NEA and RS community colleges.

The uniqueness of the AFT community colleges has important implications for both the collective bargaining and community college movements. For example, the above findings would tend to question the assumed unity of the collective bargaining movement reflected in the existing literature. To date, most speculation on this sensitive issue has regarded collective bargaining as a unified concept and neglected consideration of systematic differentiation among its underlying causes and potential consequences resulting from the nature of the institution(s) involved and/or the specific bargaining representative selected. The demonstration of institutional differences between AFT and NEA community colleges suggests that future research on and subsequent discussion of the collective bargaining controversy would have more meaning if focused on institutional characteristics. Such research should also recognize the possibility that the causes and consequences of adopting collective bargaining procedures might vary depending on the specific bargaining representative selected. The issue has become so complex that simplistic global principles have little value.

The above findings also raise serious questions concerning the potential impact of the growth of collective bargaining agreements on the still to be defined role of community colleges within the broad spectrum of American colleges and universities. For example, the above findings raise the possibility that faculty members in AFT community colleges might be characterized as "academic dissidents" in the sense that their selection of the AFT reflects their underlying disagreement with the comprehensive approach of their institutions. Is it possible that faculties of AFT community colleges are not as

supportive of the multipurpose role assigned their institutions as are their colleagues in NEA colleges? In general, the above findings suggest that faculties of AFT community colleges are more supportive of traditional academic concerns (e.g., emphasis on educational credentials and more selective admissions policies). They might tend to disagree with the "open-door" policies of their colleges and seek to restrict enrollment to students of demonstrated academic ability and those who are more able and/or willing to finance a greater share of their education.

The concepts of the "public school atmosphere"[15] of community colleges and the subsequent "high-schoolization"[16] of college could be an important difference between faculties of AFT and NEA community colleges. This difference might be reflected in the faculty members' frame of reference; colleagues in four-year institutions or colleagues in the public schools. Is it possible that faculties of AFT community colleges assess their present situation to that of professors in four-year colleges and universities, while faculties of NEA community colleges use public school teachers as their standard for comparative purposes?

Should further research support this possibility, subsequent collective bargaining elections at community colleges might well be influenced by the relative strength of conflicting philosophies of the appropriate role for these institutions within the broad spectrum of higher education. That is, those community colleges which choose to become affiliated with the AFT might tend to establish policies and procedures more consistent with the image of the four-year institution, while those which opt for affiliation with the NEA might tend to operate in a manner more compatible with the multipurpose - open-door philosophy which has been used to justify the phenomenal growth of community colleges to date.

Finally, given the unique nature of AFT community colleges and the stated positions of the national AFT organization, the selection of this bargaining representative would appear to foster the inclusion of educationally-related policy areas into the collective bargaining arena. It is quite possible, based on the above findings, that the selection of the AFT would encourage the inclusion of substantive educational issues which have traditionally been the prerogative of the faculty (e.g., criteria for faculty hiring, allocation of institutional reqources for instruction-related services, and admissions policies that determine the number and quality of students to be served) as negotiable issues in a collective bargaining agreement.

In short, this study has demonstrated that community colleges can be differentiated on the basis of which collective bargaining representative they have selected (AFT or NEA) and that those affiliated with the AFT are also different from those community colleges which have no collective bargaining affiliation. Several implications based on these institutional differences have been considered and suggest the broad implications of collective bargaining for the academic community. Further research, employing environmental variables of two-year and four-year colleges and universities, is needed to provide members of the academic community with an informed basis on which to assess the appropriateness of collective bargaining by professionals in institutions of higher education.

Table 1

Community College Rotated Factor Matrix *
(N=621 Institutions)

Variable	Factor ** I	II	III	IV
1. Tuition	-01	09	27	56
2. Gross Income/Student	77	-28	-04	14
3. State Appropriation/Student	66	-29	13	14
4. Federal Appropriation/Student	24	-29	-16	-01
5. Library Appropriation/Student	38	12	46	22
6. Percentage of Males	31	-28	-03	-02
7. Percentage of Out-of-State Students	34	-04	-21	-14
8. Percentage of Foreign Students	07	-12	-39	04
9. Percentage of Part-Time Students	-79	-18	-08	16
10. Percentage of Sophomores	47	28	-14	03
11. Total Enrollment	-59	03	-58	10
12. Percentage of Faculty with Earned Doctorate	-08	13	01	70
13. Percentage of Faculty with Masters	16	82	07	-01
14. Percentage of Faculty with Bachelors	-09	-79	-02	-20
15. Percentage of Full-Time Faculty	55	13	-21	-06
16. Full-Time Student-Faculty Ratio	-31	46	-09	-29
17. Library Size (units of 1000)	-13	17	-58	33
18. Relative Library Size	61	14	23	19
19. Department vs. Divisional Organization	00	01	02	-22
20. Percentage of Graduates Going to Four-Year Colleges	08	69	-08	-06
21. Age of Institution	16	08	-59	-23
22. Institution Established Since 1964	-08	05	66	16
23. Accreditation Status	-07	01	46	-10
24. Number of Applicants Accepted/ Number of Applicants	-10	16	06	-52
25. Counselor/Student Ratio	10	-12	43	04

* Decimals have been omitted from factor loadings.

** Factor Labels:
I Affluence
II Transfer Emphasis
III Emerging Status
IV Exclusivity

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Univariate F-Ratios
of Predictor Variables

Predictor Variables	NEA (n=79)	AFT (n=36)	Random Sample (n=50)	Univariate F-Ratio
Exclusivity				
M	48.54	56.67	49.10	11.99*
SD	8.25	9.35	8.55	
Emerging Status				
M	51.75	46.19	48.30	4.80*
SD	8.60	7.43	11.86	
Affluence				
M	48.90	44.33	47.66	4.17*
SD	7.96	6.87	8.39	
Transfer Emphasis				
M	50.52	49.94	52.46	1.31
SD	7.34	8.87	8.12	

* $p < .01$

Table 3

Predicted Classification of AFT, NEA, and Randomly Selected Community Colleges

	AFT (n=36)	NEA (n=79)	Randomly Selected (n=50)	Percent Correct Classification
AFT (n=36)	24	5	7	67%
NEA (n=79)	16	46	17	58%
Randomly Selected (n=50)	12	17	21	42%

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